

MOTHERCRAFT IN QUEENSLAND

A Story of Progress and Achievement

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INTRODUCTION

In this paper on Mothercraft in Queensland, I intend to concentrate on the voluntary work carried out in the cause of mothers and babies by the women of Queensland rather than on the history of the Maternal and Child Welfare programme of the Department of Health from 1918 onwards. Dr. H. C. Murphy, the present Director of Maternal and Child Welfare, has written an as yet unpublished history of his Department from which I have drawn some of my information. This will be brought up to date and published next year in 1968, its Jubilee year.

When we consider the excellent health of mothers and babies in Queensland today, with an average infant mortality of less than 20 per 1000 live births (17.8 in 1966 — the lowest ever recorded) — and maternal mortality of 0.30 per 1000 live births — that is to say out of every 1000 live births, 980 babies survive their first year, and out of 36,000 mothers who give birth in a year, only 9 succumb — and that women's expectation of life at birth has risen from approximately 55 years at the turn of the century, to 73 years in the latest assessment, it shows just how far Mothercraft has progressed in this State.

It is hard to conjure up in our imagination, the conditions that must have existed for mothers, babies and children when the first settlers came to Australia at the turn of the 19th century, and when in 1824 they braved the terrors of a tropical outpost, and made their first settlement at Redcliffe and later at Brisbane Town.

EARLY DAYS IN THE COLONY

Naturally the settlers newly arrived from Britain reflected the conditions that pertained in the Mother Country. The long voyage out and the primitive conditions with which they had to contend on arrival did nothing to improve their experience and practice of hygiene, especially as regards

babies and young children. The children's cemetery, once situated where North Quay now passes, bore witness to the heavy mortality among them. It is reported that in 1870, only 50 per cent. of the children born reached their fifth year.

Babies have always been the weakest link in the chain of human survival, and the infant mortality has been a gauge of the hygiene of any community. Let me quote an extract from Sir Raphael Cilento's Monograph on "Medicine in Queensland" printed by this society.

"Situation in the Early Days of Colonisation.

"In England at the time of first settlement in Australia, disease of all kinds was very prevalent and largely unidentified: dysentery, fatal diarrhoea in children, typhoid and many other fevers, or food and water-borne diseases were constantly present; "Gaol fever," "ship fever" and "camp fever," which (like the "trench fever" of World War I) were forms of louse-borne fever, were also ever present; tuberculosis and venereal diseases were very common and quite ineffectively treated; scurvy, rickets and other food deficiencies were so frequent that they were called the "English disease"; there were no controlled reticulated water supplies, so that when cholera was introduced into West Europe from Asia at that early period it resulted in vast and fatal epidemics (the last in 1892) from pumps and polluted reservoirs used by great numbers of people. Privies were virtually unknown and cesspits were regarded as an obsession of the idle rich; mental defectives either wandered at large, tolerated as 'village idiots' if they were harmless, or were chained in lunatic asylums or to logs in outhouses, if they were violent.

"Hospitals were very few, very bad, and very costly. There was no registration of medical men in England till 1858 and charlatanism was rampant and uncontrollable. Until 1859, when Florence Nightingale began her training system, there were no nurses except those of the class of "Sairey Gamp," upon which Dickens inflicted immortal infamy.

"Anaesthetics, antiseptics and disinfectants were first introduced from 1847 and from 1870 onwards and *midwifery hospitals had so grim a reputation for death in childbirth* that only destitution (defeating a perverted sense of decorum) forced women into them.

"Most surprising of all to us, I think, is the fact that diseases were not known to have separate causes at all — their differences were considered to be due to different 'constitutions' of the patients or to different degrees of 'corruption' of the air they breathed. It was only at the very end

of the period — in the 'eighties and 'nineties — that germ causes were recognised and reluctantly acknowledged.

"Prejudice Against Tropical Settlement.

"This then was the situation in the early days of colonisation in Australia and of the Moreton Bay settlement, but there was still another important aspect. The settlement in Australia was only one of those that Great Britain was establishing in all the five continents of the world as she moved almost inevitably towards a world-wide colonial empire. The new settlement was on the verge of the tropics, and experience had shown that tropical settlement was often devastating to health"

We know that the infant mortality was enormous, but no reliable figures are available even in England until 1837 let alone in the Colonies where no registration of births, deaths and marriages was enforced in Queensland until the Health Act in 1872.

BEGINNINGS OF MODERN MOTHERCRAFT

Even in 1900 the infant mortality in England was 154 per 1000. Before this time, however, governments, health authorities and medical men were becoming concerned about the preventable loss of infant and maternal life.

In France, which had been bled white from a century of wars, and was still suffering from a great shortage of manpower, it was realised that there was a continued wastage of life in infancy through the unpopularity of breast feeding and a polluted milk supply. Doctor Pierre Budin, a French Physician, was obtaining excellent results in reducing gastro-enteritis, the great scourge of infant life, by providing clean milk and also condensed milk for babies at his "Gouttes de Lait" (Drop of Milk) centres in provincial towns.

In 1905 he called a conference at Lyons to which came those interested in Infant Welfare from many countries, to consider how best to provide pure milk for babies how to supervise their health, and how to educate mothers in their care. It is considered that *modern mothercraft began at this conference.*

INFANT WELFARE IN GREAT BRITAIN

The results were far reaching. In Britain the St. Marylebone Health Society was set up in 1906 and acted as a centre for the dissemination of knowledge on Mothercraft and Infant Welfare. I myself attended courses there in 1919.

Dr. Truby King's new methods of Mothercraft were bearing fruit in New Zealand and spread to many countries.

From there the good work extended throughout Great Britain. In 1910 there were 90 Infant Welfare Centres; by 1914 the number had risen to 400; and when the Child Welfare Act was passed in 1918 — the very year when Baby Clinics were started in Queensland — there were 1561 Infant Welfare Centres under Local Authorities, 870 Voluntary centres, and 153 Maternity Institutions under the Ministry of Health. The emphasis in Great Britain, as indeed in the Southern States of Australia and New Zealand (but *not* in Queensland), was always on a combination and co-operation of health authorities with voluntary effort. The policy was directed towards the promotion of breast feeding and education of mothers themselves in the care of their babies.

Systems of Lady Health Visitors were set up by Local Authorities to help mothers in their homes; and the Mayor of Huddersfield offered a prize of one pound each year to all mothers in his district whose babies lived to celebrate their first birthday. In France and Europe great emphasis was given through the Lyons conference to Infant Welfare and pure milk; while in U.S.A. the establishment of the first *Bureau of Child Hygiene* in 1908 opened a new era in child health programmes. The emphasis then as now was placed on providing a supply of pure cow's milk and modifying it for artificial feeding of babies rather than on inducing and assisting mothers to feed their babies naturally.

MATERNAL WELFARE IN GREAT BRITAIN

Hand in hand with infant welfare, was maternal welfare. Sir Arthur Newshome stated as late as 1915 that his report on maternal mortality was intended to draw attention to "this unnecessary mortality from child-birth, to stimulate local enquiry on the subject, and to encourage measures which will make the occurrence of illness and disability due to child bearing, a rarer event than at present." His successor, Sir George Newman, reporting 10 years later (1925), referred to the fact that *3000 mothers died in child-birth in Britain every year* over the last 10 years, and deplored this "loss of life at the time of its highest capacity and most fruitful effort." Dame Janet Campbell, who visited Queensland in the interests of Maternal and Child Welfare in the early 1930's stated in her 1927 report that "the death of the mother is often followed by the death of the baby and by the impaired health and nutrition of the remaining children." It was at last recognised how closely infant welfare was bound up with maternal welfare.

In 1931 the visit of Dame Janet Campbell gave great impetus to Maternal and Child Welfare throughout Australia. A conference on the subject was called in Canberra at which

I, as President of M.A.Q., attended. Dame Enid Lyons and I were asked by the Commonwealth Health Authorities to write a report on the "Personal Needs of Mothers." Our combined efforts produced a good report, but it was too far-reaching for the Health Department and it was simply pigeonholed and suppressed.

I have described the progress of Infant Welfare and its handmaid Mothercraft, in Great Britain, with some detail because what took place in the mother country was reflected and applied in the Colonies within the next few years. Indeed, most of our health and education Acts were taken over holus bolus from the British Acts.

This was natural because the Colonists from the British Isles, brought with them their own way of life, their institutions as well as their diseases. This pertained until it was realised that the laws, the housing, the diseases, the infant care and mothercraft of the old country, did not entirely fit in to a new land like Queensland with its tropical and sub-tropical climate, its great distances and scattered population — e.g., wool next to the skin.

EARLY PICTURES OF MOTHERCRAFT IN COLONIES

In those days women had very large families but they did not expect to rear more than a small proportion of their children, depending largely on the social status of the family, whether they lived in city or country and on the current epidemics. The care of babies was entirely traditional, and was in the hands of ignorant women, whether mothers or "nurses" (so called), who gained their experience at the expense of their charges or their children, rather than from any fore-knowledge or training in their care. Mothercraft, as we know it, as a craft based on medical knowledge, did not exist.

Scanning the columns of an old cookery book used in Queensland and of the current handbooks for ladies of the mid-nineteenth century, I can find no reference whatever to the care of children or the making of clothes or toys, although many chapters were devoted to needlework, crochet, tatting, knitting, millinery and the making of frivolities for bazaars and entertainment, as well as pages of parlour games and hints on deportment. I found one homely remedy for diphtheria (namely kerosene), and another for a poultice made from the lye of wood ashes. The new edition of Mrs. Beeton's "Book of Household Management 1869" the guide of Queensland ladies of that period, does, however, devote a small section to the management of the nursery and sick room, to a mother's responsibilities in the care of her

children and their moral training, including the duties of governess and nurses.

"The mother's influence is paramount," writes Mrs. Beeton. "No matter what good nurses and attendants she may be able to engage for her little ones, what pleasures, changes of air, model nurseries, toys and books she may afford for their benefit, she should devote, at any rate, some part of her time to them; should be with them often; should know their childish tastes and faults, and strive by her influence, precepts and example, to make them what she hopes they may be in the future."

Very modern really!

This is the first glimmering I could find of instruction in good Mothercraft.

From my own family one of my grandmothers married in 1869, and living in a dairying district of New South Wales, had 13 children in 16 years, only one of whom succumbed to gastro-enteritis at four months. Twelve lived to grow up — a remarkable record — but considered very moderate in that district where mothers had 16 to 24 children and reared nearly all of them.

My other grandmother, however, living largely in Sydney Town, and mining areas near the Queensland border, buried four of her 10 children in infancy, and one in early childhood. Only five out of 10 lived to grow up, and that was the usual average.

Queensland's most progressive medical men followed the oversea's advances closely, and in 1867 the new modern North Brisbane hospital was opened at Bowen Hills. In 1864-66 the Lady Bowen Lying-in Hospital was founded. Its first resident medical officer was Dr. Joseph Bancroft from 1866 to 1871, and thereafter he acted as visiting medical officer.

Though there was now an up-to-date maternity hospital and of course a general hospital, there was no provision whatever for sick children — and there many of them.

ESTABLISHMENT OF HOSPITAL FOR SICK CHILDREN

The general hospital did not admit children under five years, as the prevailing idea in those days was that sick children would be better nursed by their own mothers in their own homes. However, the inexperience of mothers in nursing, the expense of medical treatment and the prevalence of infectious diseases in those days resulted in a very high mortality rate. In Brisbane during the early 1870s, 50 per cent. of the population died before reaching five years.

This state of affairs was recognised and deplored but nothing was done. However, the plight of the little ones moved the hearts of the women of the Colony — particularly that of Mrs. David McConnell of Cressbrook. I will describe the beginnings of the Hospital for Sick Children in the words of this lady in her "Memories of Days Long Gone-by."

MRS. McCONNELL'S "MEMORIES"

Near the McConnell's home in the rural area of Indooroopilly there were many migrant families living in tents lent by the Government till they could clear their land of trees and build their own houses from the slabs they cut from them. Wives helped their husbands in the clearing, fencing, sawing and building.

"Meanwhile," she writes, "the little ones played about, while the older cared for them, as they attended to their domestic duties. They soon learned to be very useful. The climate favoured an outdoor life. There were frequent accidents and sickness among the children. It was a long journey for a sick child in a springless dray to the doctor whose fee was 10/-, and then the journey home, to be cared for in a tent. Frequently the little ones succumbed. I witnessed some sad cases.

"I went to the Bowen Hospital, as our General Hospital was then called to see if there was any room for little ones. No. Men's and women's wards all crowded. I thought it was time to have a sick children's hospital, and resolved with God's help to have one in Brisbane. In all Australia there was only one, and that was in Melbourne, the capital of Victoria.

"Invited a large number of ladies with their children to afternoon tea in 'Witton' Grounds and told them of the suffering little ones and what they could do to get a hospital for them."

The response was wonderful. They were filled with enthusiasm. The ladies worked hard, collected, and had a work stall at the Exhibition. The people of the young Colony, even the school children, took an active part in raising money for the Children's Hospital.

A two-storey building on St. Paul's Terrace (probably where St. Paul's Presbyterian Church now stands or near by), housed the first children's hospital and had 15 beds; it moved several times and had its ups and downs. However, Mrs. McConnell wrote some years later—

"From the time of the Hospital's opening on March 11th, 1878, till today, it has prospered. It is now one

of the largest in Australia; and it is continually being enlarged, and always free from debt. God has surely blessed the labour of our hands."

DR. A. JEFFRIES TURNER AND HIS WORK

Meanwhile in 1889, a young Dr. A. Jeffries Turner, then 27 years, newly arrived from England after a brilliant medical course in London, was appointed first Medical Officer to the Hospital for Sick Children, and from then on devoted his life to the welfare of babies and children.

Not only did he seek to reduce the incidence and deaths from diphtheria, introduce "intubation" for the deadly "membranous croup" and work to control hookworm, but he, with Dr. Lockhart Gibson, established after much research, that lead paint on houses was the cause of the lead-poisoning so prevalent in Queensland children in the early days. He was also responsible for the recognition of tuberculosis as an infectious and notifiable disease in this State.

Dr. Turner always brought his scientific outlook and knowledge to bear on any subject he tackled—from his keen interest and observation in the field of entomology (he published over 100 papers on butterflies and moths in a wide range of scientific journals) to his work on infant and child welfare. His interest lay even more in the preventive field than in the cure of established sickness.

Quite early he realised that a baby's chance of survival and good health depended in the first place on the maternity nurse and then on the kind of care which the mother herself gave her baby in the home. Instinct was not enough and led to many mistakes. She needed both education in "mothercraft" and some continuous easily available assistance in her task.

Diphtheria, gastro-enteritis, typhoid and other infectious diseases, were very prevalent among the children even at the turn of the century, and mothers were only just beginning to realise their responsibilities as to isolation to prevent the spread of severe infections.

INFANT WELFARE IN QUEENSLAND 1902 TO 1913

From the first "Interim Report on Health" by Dr. Burnett Ham in 1902, to the report of Dr. J. I. Moore, Commissioner of Public Health in 1913, I can find only two references to the health of children — one was to the dark and insanitary condition of the school latrines — (a state of affairs which still pertain in many schools to this day) — and the other was in the 1913 report in reference to infectious diseases:—

"Parents are now beginning to recognise in this respect the importance of safeguarding the health of their children and the necessity for assisting by preventing as far as possible the healthy children from mixing with their less fortunate playmates — which in itself is the prime cause of the spread of disease."

QUEENSLAND "CHILD WELFARE SERVICE" 1918 ONWARDS

The infant mortality in Queensland in 1904 was 76.1 per 1000 live births and for the next 10 years ranged between 77 and 63 (1913). (Always lower than the Commonwealth figures however). New Zealand and the southern States had established Baby health centres and Mothercraft homes. However, it was not until 1918 that a Child Welfare Service was established by the Queensland Government.

BABY CLINICS

Four Baby Clinics were opened in Brisbane — at Valley, Woolloongabba, Spring Hill and West End in wooden cottages, three of which were subsequently replaced by two-storied brick buildings. Miss Chatfield, Matron of the Diamantina Hospital, was appointed supervisor, and visited Sydney to ensure into the methods of their well-established Baby Health Centres and Tressillian Training School. The first two nurses were sent to obtain their Child Welfare Certificate at Tressillian in Sydney, and the methods of mothercraft established there by Dr. Margaret Harper were used here.

These early centres could not have been devoted strictly to infants, but other general hospital out-patients were treated there as well. I remember visiting the Valley Baby Clinic one morning on my way through to Townsville in 1922 to find an adult case of burns being dressed there — but no babies!

TRAINING OF INFANT WELFARE NURSES

It was soon realised that in order to achieve the best results it would be necessary for Queensland to have its own training school for Infant Welfare nurses; and Miss Chatfield sent Miss Barron, a staff nurse who had shown a great aptitude for teaching, to New Zealand to the Karitane Training School in Dunedin where Dr. Truby King's methods were followed. The "Truby King" or "Plunkett" type of training, modified to suit Queensland conditions, was thereafter adopted at the Child Welfare Training School set up in Brisbane in 1924.

Two courses of four months day classes and practical

work in the Clinics were given each year. By 1927, 37 nurses had gained their certificates. Since the beginning over 2,000 nurses have received their certificates and the course was extended in 1950 to six months to bring it into line with the training courses in other States. The school has never been entirely residential.

Owing to Dr. Turner's efforts, nurses in Maternity hospitals were given tuition in infant feeding and management and nurses in country hospitals were encouraged, indeed, given an allowance, to complete their course in Infant Welfare in Brisbane.

DR. TURNER — FIRST DIRECTOR

It was not until 1926, however, that the Infant Welfare Department had a Medical Director. Dr. A. Jeffries Turner was appointed its first Director (part time basis), and Miss Chatfield retired as the supervisor, having, as Dr. Murphy states in his *"History of the Maternal and Child Welfare Service in Queensland,"* "securely laid the foundation of a Child Welfare Service of high quality and efficiency." Miss Barron succeeded her as Supervisor till when Miss Bardsley took over. She was followed by Miss Jenkinson who retired in Miss Nixon is now supervisor of nurses. I myself have worked in the clinics in the Valley, West End and Woolloongabba for many years — that is while voluntary honorary medical officers still attended, and can speak from personal experience of the high quality of their work, and the dedicated attitude these nurses brought to it.

GROWTH OF CLINICS

When Dr. Turner became Director, the work was beginning to extend beyond the metropolis and centres had been established at Wynnum, Ipswich, Maryborough, Bundaberg, Rockhampton, Mackay, Townsville and Cairns. 1927 saw a clinic in Charters Towers, 1930 at Warwick. Having established full-time centres in the large country towns and main Brisbane suburbs, Branch Clinics and Sub-Centres were opened in smaller country towns and outlying suburbs in various parts of the State; and in 1930 a travelling service was inaugurated with railway car set up as a clinic to spread the new knowledge of mothercraft to outback mothers.

This was well received by outback residents and an itinerary of the State was made each year. A yearly visit was of little use, however, to mothers in need, so shorter, more frequent trips are now arranged, and more branch centres established.

This is the early history of Mothercraft in Queensland, linked closely as it is with the Government Department of Health. For the subsequent history I refer you to the history of the Department by Dr. Murphy and the Annual Reports of the Department of Maternal and Child Welfare. These should be read, as I said in my introduction, in conjunction with this paper which from now on will be devoted to the history of voluntary organisations devoted to some aspect of Mothercraft.

INAUGURATION OF MOTHERCRAFT ASSOCIATION

Even with this progress, by 1930 Dr. Turner felt that a *knowledge* of mothercraft was still not reaching a majority of women. They were not taking full advantage of the Baby Clinics, and he had no means of spreading *mothercraft education*, which, he felt, was the most important factor in infant welfare. Moreover, his long-envisaged *mothercraft home* for premature babies and difficult feeding cases, and for a training centre, seemed no nearer realisation. He believed that while the Government was doing it all, there would be no participation of the ordinary women of the community in maternal and child welfare.

Accordingly in 1931 he wrote a letter to me as convener of the Health Standing Committee of the National Council of Women, asking that the women of Brisbane form a voluntary organisation to spread a knowledge of good mothercraft throughout the State and as soon as possible co-operate with the Government in establishing a Mothercraft Home.

On 14 October 1931, Mrs. Cumbrae-Stewart, President of the N.C.W., called a public meeting at which representatives of all the major organisations were present, and the Mothercraft Association of Queensland was inaugurated, with the following "Aims and Objectives":—

AIMS AND OBJECTS OF ASSOCIATION

- (1) The education of mothers in Mothercraft, with a view to promoting the welfare of babies, growing children and mothers throughout the State.
- (2) To assist in this objective the Association shall co-operate with the Government in establishing and maintaining a Mothercraft Home as a centre of educative information in Mothercraft available to all women for treatment of cases of malnutrition, prematurity and difficult feeding, whether breast feeding or artificial feeding, and as a specialised training school for nurses.
- (3) To co-ordinate their activities with similar organisations elsewhere. The Association will endeavour to acquire

such accurate knowledge and information as is available on all matters affecting the health of women and children, and will interchange this information with other authorities, and will disseminate such knowledge as widely as possible to the whole community; particularly to parents.

- (4) The Association will assist outlying localities to establish and maintain Branch Baby Clinics in their own districts, the staff and conduct of these clinics to be subject to the approval of the Director of Infants Welfare in Queensland.

FIRST EXECUTIVES

The first year of existence of the new Association initiated a very active programme in promotion of these aims by an enthusiastic committee under the presidency of Dr. Phyllis Cilento with Mrs. Arnold Conrad as Hon. Corresponding Secretary, Mrs. Henry Trace as Hon. Recording Secretary, Mrs. Gifford Cross as Hon. Treasurer. Vice-presidents were the president of the National Council of Women, the Lady Mayoress and the then wife of the Home Secretary.

An advisory committee of medical women was also set up with Dr. Shirley Lane (now Dr. Crawford), Dr. Doris Wagner, Dr. Alexa McLean, Dr. Beatrice Warner, and naturally the President (ex-officio). Always the President of the Mothercraft Association has been a medical woman. Apart from myself, Dr. Doris Wagner, Dr. Helen Row, Dr. Vera Watson and Dr. Abraham held that office.

Most of the relevant organisations sent representatives or co-operated with the work in some way and we also had the blessing of the British Medical Association.

FIRST MOTHERCRAFT LECTURES

The first activity of the Mothercraft Association was a series of public evening lectures on Mothercraft, given at the Valley Baby Clinic Building (not used at night), under the paternal eye of Dr. Turner. (These were, I believe, the first lectures of this nature ever given in the State. The subjects were:—

1. Ante-Natal Care.
2. Breast Feeding.
3. Normal Child.
4. Artificial Feeding.
5. Mixed Feeding.
6. Care of Teeth.
7. General Lecture.

The lectures were well attended and typed copies were widely distributed.

At the instance of Dr. Turner, an accurate and well designed measuring spoon was made, measuring $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. or 1 tablespoon on one end, and 1 dram or 1 teaspoon the other. There were at that time, no accurate measuring spoons. They were sold at cost to mothers who had to measure their baby's foods accurately.

An attractive "*Nursery Cookery Book*" with notes on nutrition and simple recipes for babies and children to school age, was produced in the 2nd year and sold for 1/-.

Demonstrations, displays teaching good mothercraft, were organised and a model nursery set up for a national Health Week and also with posters at the Exhibition for several years.

HEADQUARTERS

A Mothercraft Headquarters was established in the National Mutual Building with nominal rental owing to the courtesy of the Insurance Company and Sharp and Musgrave. There a mothercraft advice centre and library of books on mothercraft and child management, was set up; there the mothercraft spoon, cookery books, layette patterns were sold, and an area where economical nursery furniture, approved baby clothes and other articles used for their care and welfare were displayed.

To raise money, one of the first "Nursery Shops" I remember in Brisbane, was set up during Show fortnight in a vacant shop in Adelaide Street, and sold every kind of approved children's wear and nursery gadgets mostly hand-made.

Weekly broadcasts on mothercraft by courtesy of Station 4BC became another feature of the work and articles on similar subjects were published in city and country papers.

NO MOTHERCRAFT HOME

Although mothercraft education proceeded apace, the establishment of a Mothercraft Home still hung fire; although the Home Secretary had written to both the Association and the Supervisor of the Clinics assuring us that the Home would be established very shortly and that the old Lady Lamington Hospital now vacated as a Women's Hospital was set aside for that purpose, nothing was done; although the Mothercraft Association had offered to assist in its equipment and maintenance, the offer was ignored. A change in Government took place, and the new Labour policy to preclude all voluntary participation in any of its plans, was gradually realised by the young and enthusiastic Association, and the Director's dream of a Mothercraft Home was actually postponed for

many years, and no Mothercraft Home was established by the Department until 1943.

Their energetic pursuance of their other objectives was not daunted by this setback — only diverted into other channels, and the M.A.Q. embarked on an ever wider programme of public education, and endeavoured to raise its funds in ways that assisted its objectives — such as by children's out-of-door parties, lectures (courses for parents and expectant mothers), a Baby Competition showing good mothercraft (not a Baby Show) which we did not consider in the best interests of babies themselves.

MOTHERCRAFT IN SCHOOLS

In 1934, the biggest step forward in promoting good mothercraft was made. After several deputations to the Director of Education, we were allowed to *teach Mothercraft in primary schools*. In that first year a course of eight lectures and demonstrations was given by a treble certificated Sister to 600 girls in Technical and Domestic Science Schools and to 20 girls at Somerville House. Teaching equipment and a lifesize baby doll were purchased, leaflets of the lectures were printed, and the students made books of practical work, sat for an examination and those who passed were presented with certificates. Much the same procedure is still followed in the present teaching given at long last throughout the State.

When the great depression hit Queensland, many families were on Unemployment Relief. Mothers were much in need of advice and help in making ends meet, and providing their children with the most nourishing food obtainable for the money. As an Hon. Out-patient Physician at the Children's Hospital, I had reason to know this and that many children were suffering from malnutrition — largely owing to their mother's ignorance of food values and economical buying and preparation.

"SQUARE MEALS FOR THE FAMILY"

The Association was asked by the Home Secretary to prepare a simple booklet on how to feed the family economically. Accordingly I prepared with the help of Mrs. Jean Lovegrove a pamphlet "Square Meals for the Family," which was published by the Association and distributed throughout Queensland. It proved very useful to mothers but the economy measures suggested became a political football at the time, and the Government would have no part in it.

Mothercraft teaching in schools increased each year and a full-time Sister, Miss Rosa Michele, replaced Miss Craw-

ford, and also gave advice to mothers in the rooms, and other lectures and demonstrations.

The work continued to expand throughout the metropolitan schools, Wynnum and Ipswich, and private schools, but we had not the finance to go into the country, and no Government money was forthcoming for this valuable project.

EVACUATION OF SCHOOLS AND MOTHERCRAFT TEACHING TO STATE

This far-reaching work was continued by the Association until the metropolitan schools were evacuated for fear of bombing during the war. After the war, in 1946, the Association requested the Department of Maternal and Child Welfare to take over the service and continue it along the same lines that had proved so successful and to extend it throughout the State. This they did, with Michele as lecturer, but it was another 20 years (1966) before teaching of mothercraft was actually taken to the country schools all through the State.

In the long view I believe that this was the most effective means of inculcating good mothercraft; for I am always meeting mothers of families — some grandmothers — from many parts of Queensland who tell me they received a mothercraft certificate as school girls, and how valuable their knowledge had been in rearing their own families and helping their neighbours.

The next step was to provide some *trained help for mothers* and babies in their homes. As there was no mothercraft training school in this State, mothers had to rely on Tressillian, Karitane nurses, or those from other southern training schools who came north for employment; but they were expensive and hard to obtain, and the need was great — as indeed it still is.

HOME ASSISTANTS' TRAINING COURSE

In 1937 the first training course for Home Assistants was inaugurated using the rooms in the National Mutual for evening lectures. Thirty-seven girls, mothers and even grandmothers undertook the course, several with a view to becoming full-time Home Assistants and joining the Motherhood Service Bureau, which was, indeed, set up the following year.

The first course consisted of five sections each with 10 lectures and practical work and each section being arranged by an expert in the subject. The sections were: 1. Mothercraft. 2. Housecraft. 3. Home nutrition and home cook-

ing. 4. Child Management. 5. Home First Aid and Home Nursing.

This overall plan of training was adopted and carried out over the years with modifications, and proved most complete and effective in training Home Assistants throughout the life of the Association.

MOTHERHOOD SERVICE BUREAU

As soon as some Home Assistants received their certificates in 1938, a Motherhood Service Bureau was set up, where mothers could obtain the services of these trained girls in their homes before, during, or after their confinements, and in any other household emergency. The average stay was two to four weeks and proved a boon to many families. The Bureau continued to function till 1964 as a function of the Mothercraft Council, but no new Home Assistants could be trained, and it became impossible to fulfil the requests. From the very beginning the calls for help in the home always far exceeded the number we were able to supply.

Many fine girls passed through the course and became Home Assistants, rendering a high standard and much needed service to the families of Queensland from 1938 right through the war years and after. I still get calls from desperate mothers and husbands for a Home Assistant in some domestic emergency. The training was of course much improved when the Mothercraft Hostel and After-care Home was established in 1942.

Up till the outbreak of war in 1939 every avenue of Mothercraft education was vigorously promoted and several deputations were organised to the Ministry of Health to expedite the opening of a Mothercraft home, and extend mothercraft services in every way. When Sir Raphael Cilento became Director General of Health and Medical Services, the Association assisted in revising the Mothercraft Handbook and was represented on the new Nutrition Council when he set up, and helped to arrange lectures on Nutrition and the practical cooking classes held in the Domestic Science School located in the Lady Lamington Hospital building and conducted by the late Miss Schauer. Copies of these lectures given by various specialists were widely distributed through the Association. (I came top of one cooking course!!)

MOTHERCRAFT HOME AND VALLEY CLINIC

It was during Sir Raphael's Directorship that the first Mothercraft Home was actually opened at Riverton Street, Clayfield, and the training of Mothercraft Nurses began. From 1925 onwards, when a premature baby was admitted

to the *Fortitude Valley Baby Clinic* for skilled care, a small number of premature and delicate babies were cared for in the upper story of the clinic — sometimes with their mothers.

Despite the most simple and homely conditions — compared with the highly technical and specialised equipment of premature babies' wards today at Women's Hospital and Mater Mother's — the results were excellent. I myself used to attend there as a locum for Dr. Turner from time to time (until I "blotted my copy-book" by giving a malnourished baby a dummy, thus saving its life, I believe). But it was "against the strict rules" of those days, and Dr. Turner never had much faith in me after that. Mothercraft practices are different nowadays — in fact the practice has swung full circle in the last 40 years.

There was at the demonstration centre at the Valley then no refrigerator of course; only an ice-chest for milk; demonstrations were set up with drip safes for meat and evaporation coolers for milk and various other ways for preserving food in summer for country and far out suburban mothers. The excellent results were due to the meticulous care and devotion of the nursing staff — I remember particularly Miss Axelsen and Miss Nixon (now Superintendent of Nurses), and Dr. Turner's expert direction.

As the old Lady Lamington buildings being occupied for various purposes all those years, a Mothercraft Home could not be set up there as originally intended, so in 1943 when Dr. Matthewson was Director of Maternal and Child Welfare, the Clayfield property was acquired and set up as a Home for difficult baby cases and their mothers and as a training school — the first of the present five Homes — since established in Toowoomba, Ipswich, Rockhampton, and Townsville. The Lady Lamington main building is now the headquarters and offices of the Maternal and Child Welfare Department, while the Home itself is located in the auxiliary buildings at the rear of the original hospital.

RELATIONS BETWEEN M.A.Q. AND DEPARTMENT

No voluntary participation in the Mothercraft Homes or indeed in any field of Infant Welfare was tolerated by the Government, although a pound for pound subsidy was given for donations when the Association proved its worthiness and public usefulness (as in other voluntary organisations). The practice in New Zealand and the Southern States of co-operation of voluntary mothercraft organisations and Government departments of Maternal, Infant and Child Welfare (as envisaged by Dr. Turner in 1931) has proved most effective in those States and engaged the interest and

devotion of women throughout the whole community. Here the Mothercraft Association worked as a complementary organisation not attempting to overlap the departmental work, but rather to stimulate education of mothers and encourage them to take advantage of the facilities offered by the Clinics and the Department. I believe our activities provided a constant stimulus to the Department's work, and of course the Association pushed into fields where a Government Department could not venture without delay and red tape. *The policy of the Mothercraft Association was always to watch the changing needs of mothers and children and to meet them as quickly and effectively as possible.*

Thus when the War broke upon us in 1939 many new and urgent needs became evident.

WAR SERVICE AUXILIARY

As the war proceeded and more and more service men were sent overseas and north, the plight of their wives and children was for many months desperate. Their allowance of 3/- per day for a wife and 1/- per day for each child was quite inadequate for their needs, especially in any sickness or emergency. The M.A.Q. established a *War Service Auxiliary* with a bureau to which cases of hardship could apply for help (the Law Society also participated in this and gave legal advice free).

The Mothercraft rooms became a centre to which lonely or distressed wives could come for advice in their difficulties and friendly companionship as well as material assistance. It came to act also as a rest room for mothers and they often left their children to be minded while shopping (out of this grew the Kindercraft Organisation later).

Sewing services and aid posts were set up in many centres in the suburbs to make and provide clothes, layettes and other amenities for service men's families in need.

The War Service Auxiliary also undertook to investigate and recommend to the Military authorities those cases where compassionate leave for the husband was absolutely essential; and when the military improved the conditions for service men's families, the authorities asked the Auxiliary to continue its work and actually recognised it as the official body for Family Welfare.

REFUGEES AND EVACUEES

The members adopted a uniform — light blue blouse and navy skirt and hat with a Mothercraft Brooch and were well received wherever they went. Hundreds of cases of Family Welfare were investigated and assisted by the four special workers in this field — with the support always of the

Executive and members of the Association behind them — *Mrs. Doris Both, O.B.E., Mrs. Daphne Hamilton, Mrs. Sylvia Ringrose, and Mrs. Lorna James.*

Ships bringing in refugees from Hong Kong, China and Pacific areas were met and, working with other organisations, evacuees were assisted in every way.

TRAINING COURSE FOR EMERGENCY CARE OF CHILDREN

As invasion loomed, and children were being evacuated to the West, it was realised that crowded camps in inland areas could be very unhygienic and malnutrition could be a problem, unless there were trained people to care for them. So a training school was set up for "Emergency Care of Children" at the vacant Lady Lamington building with practical training under camping conditions and over a hundred women were trained and given certificates to care expertly for children in case of invasion. They were registered with the Minister for Home Affairs. Providentially the Coral Sea Victory turned our enemies from our doors. A handbook on "Emergency Care of Children" was published as a guide to all who might have to undertake this task, and was distributed all over the State. It remains a useful guide should the necessity ever arise again.

TOOWOOMBA MOTHERCRAFT ASSOCIATION

A branch of the Mothercraft Association was now established in Toowoomba, through which many evacuated families passed on their way further west. Courses in Emergency Care of Children, following the pattern set in the Brisbane training school, were held in Toowoomba and 49 trained women, including nine trained nurses, were at the ready to carry out any emergency care that was needed. The need for a Day Nursery became very evident in Toowoomba — the centre of a large outlying district — and a Mothercraft Day Nursery was set up in disused Bank of N.S.W. premises and was very much used. Though it has had to change its home several times, the service to the mothers and babies of Toowoomba district has been continuous, and has since grown to be the popular Civic Centre Mothercraft Nursery, an established and much appreciated social service to the city.

The Toowoomba Mothercraft Association is now an autonomous organisation, but has always maintained its objective of education of parents and the public in good mothercraft.

The Air Force Recruiting staff was also located in an adjunct to the Lady Lamington Building: but there was no

mess there and the men found their allowance of 2/6 per day sustenance allowance quite inadequate; so the surplus food from the cookery courses at the training school was given to these rather hungry men in the abandoned basement of the building.

CANTEEN FOR AIR FORCE RECRUITING CENTRE

From these beginnings, developed a *daytime canteen* for the Air Force recruiting personnel, and when the group moved to Creek Street they asked the Canteen to stay with them in their new quarters.

With all voluntary work and careful buying, the Association was able to supply morning and afternoon teas for 2d. for the staff (free to all recruits), and a substantial two-course meal for 6d. to 1/-, and make a small profit. It was owing to the hard work and clever planning of the members of this branch of the War Auxiliary, particularly to the late Mrs. Parkinson and the late Mrs. Johnston that the canteen proved such a success.

The Family Welfare, now officially recognised, brought many sad cases to light and the need for a Hostel for the emergency care of the families of service men (and others) became more urgent.

BEGINNINGS OF KINDERCRAFT

The plight of a family of five under 10 years with a sick mother who eventually died from lack of timely medical care, and the difficulties of shopping mothers in the city brought to a head the urgent need for a Mothercraft Hostel for babies and young children and for a Day Nursery in the city. These cases were brought to the notice of Mr. Bray, Editor of the Courier-Mail, and Mr. Williams, Managing Director, and the paper entered whole-heartedly into the projects of raising money for these important objectives and a public appeal was made, both C. & K. and Mothercraft co-operating in the projects.

With the resulting funds — approximately £3,000 (a large sum in those days)—a “Kindercraft Day Nursery was set up in a building in Queen Street — using £750, while the £2,250 purchased a home in Jordan Terrace, Bowen Hills, and set it up as a Hostel for mothers, babies and young children who were in need of emergency care. Minimum fees were charged for those who could afford to pay, but the service was free to families of service men. No one was ever turned away for lack of ability to pay.

Miss Crawford, triple certificated sister, was the first Matron, and eight Home Assistants went into residential training. From the first the Mothercraft Hostel and After-

care Home opened in 1942, was a success and well supported—the public was really becoming more mothercraft-minded.

In 1945 we outgrew the Bowen Hills Home and purchased a large property, "Ashton Hall," in Bonney Avenue, Clayfield, and gradually enlarged and improved it to become a really efficient Home and training school, 12 Home Assistants being trained there each year. It thus fulfilled a triple function.

In 1947, when I was preparing to join my husband at United Nations in New York, the name was changed to the "Lady Cilento Mothercraft Hostel and After-care Home," an honour which I much appreciated on my departure.

WAR AUXILIARIES LECTURES ON V.D.

Another wartime project undertaken by the Mothercraft Association was lecturing to women and girls in factories, shops, offices and in the W.A.A.F.'s on the *prevention of Venereal Disease* which was then rampant in the community. There were at least 1 million soldiers in Queensland. Sir Raphael Cilento asked if the Association could assist in this way in his campaign to control venereal disease, and the four medical women on the technical committee undertook the actual lectures which were organised by the War Auxiliary. Some 6,000 girls received the instruction in courses of two lectures, and the Colonel in charge of the W.A.A.F.'s asked for a further course of four talks on preventive measures for women already in the services. The lecturers were Dr. Shirley Crawford, Dr. Doris Wagner, Dr. Isobel McLelland, and Lady Cilento.

SALE OF ASHTON HALL

As the work of the Hostel grew it was realised that Ashton Hall, even with all its enlargements and improvements, with modern nursery, kitchens, milk room and laundries, refrigeration, steam cookers, etc., and trainees' quarters, was too cumbersome and inconvenient for economical running; so when the Coronation Fund became available, it was used as the nucleus for building an up-to-date Hostel, nursery and training centre on part of the land already held in Victoria Street. Ashton Hall was sold to the Presbyterian Church for a Girls' Hostel, and I believe it is still used for this purpose.

This very modern and well-planned Hostel, again assisted in its beginnings by the Courier-Mail, functioned well in all respects until 1961, when, even though subsidised by the Government on a £ for £ basis, the expense of a fully trained staff coupled with the few mothers entering the home and

the falling off of children during the financial recession, proved too great a burden for the Association to carry.

HOSTEL REDUNDANT

The absolutely free accommodation offered to mothers at the Mothercraft Homes by the Department of Maternal and Child Welfare and the opening of the Sandgate Children's Home to babies as well as older children, now fulfilled the needs of the many; and even the small fees charged by the Hostel proved beyond the means of those who had previously found the Hostel such a boon. In fact, the Mothercraft Hostel and After-care Home had outlived its usefulness and was redundant, except as a child care centre and training school for Home Assistants.

It could have continued to function well in these respects if the professional executive members of the Association had been content with fewer trained staff; but they would not lower this standard, and recommended its discontinuance.

The organisation most nearly related to the M.A.Q.'s aims and objectives was the Creche and Kindergarten Association, and the Hostel was offered to it as a residential Hostel for its students. It was gladly accepted and has since proved a most valuable home for country, Northern Territory and New Guinea students.

LIQUIDATION OF WHOLE ASSOCIATION

It was not realised, however, at the time that according to the constitution the Association could not donate any part of its possessions without going into liquidation; and with many heartfelt regrets and the great disappointment of all those who had worked so hard over the years to put Mothercraft on the map in Queensland the Association was dissolved.

In the meantime the Association had not neglected its educational programme. "Mothercraft" continued its annual publication; talks on Mothercraft were given as public lectures and to groups; broadcasts were given.

EDUCATION FOR NATURAL CHILD BIRTH

A new field was also entered in training *Expectant mothers* for *Natural Child Birth* and in prenatal and baby care. Prenatal courses of eight classes were held first in Lady Cilento's rooms and later in Centaur House. A film on Natural Child Birth, "Child Birth Without Fear," was donated and another "From Generation to Generation" was bought. These films and lectures proved very popular. This work was later handed over with loan of much of the equipment to the newly-formed "Childbirth Education Associa-

tion" and it is still carried on by that body with emphasis on the Psycho-prophylactil method.

After the liquidation the nucleus of the members was incorporated into the *Mothercraft Council within the Creche and Kindergarten Association*, and continued to run a Home Assistants' Bureau with many calls for its own Home Assistants, trained mothercraft nurses from other States and Kindercraft nurses. Owing to lack of sufficient trained helpers to fill more than a small proportion of the calls the Bureau was finally closed.

Attempts were made to again train girls as Home Assistants, but without a training centre this proved impracticable, and although another Housekeeper Service has now started, trained help is not employed, nor is it available.

The C.W.A. Housekeeper service struggled along for many years, without sufficient numbers to fill requests; the Red Cross Housekeeper Service was also of great service to mothers, but that had to be abandoned for financial reasons; and there is still no adequate Government subsidised emergency service for mothers as in other States. It is one of the great necessities still to be met in this State — trained home assistance to mothers and babies which will set an example of good mothercraft with parents in their own homes — not taking the little ones away from their own home environment to be cared for in a strange place with strange people.

At present the Mothercraft Council with use of its own funds carries out its original objectives in a modified way, by contributing books on child care to the College library, in continuing to keep the publication "Mothercraft" up-to-date, and now proposes to publish a *QUARTERLY MAGAZINE ON PARENTCRAFT* and child management to be distributed through local pre-school centres throughout the State.

WORK OF M.A.Q. COMPLETED

I believe that when the Mothercraft Association finally dissolved on October 1961 after exactly 30 years of valuable service to the cause of motherhood it had completed its mission of education in mothercraft in many fields and in seeing Mothercraft Homes and child care centres established throughout the State.

Maternal and baby welfare is now adequately catered for by the Department of the Government with its 270 centres, its antenatal and its toddlers' clinics; its five mothercraft homes; its Child Care Hostel at Sandgate; its correspondence services for country mothers; its teaching of Mothercraft in 157 schools; its nurses' training courses; and its social ser-

vices; also its articles published in 60 newspapers throughout the State; and with its three full-time, one part-time medical officers and staff of Infant Welfare Sisters to carry on the work and maintain its high standards. This is shown in the continuously falling rates of infant mortality to the lowest ever on record of 17.8 per 1000 live births and a maternal mortality that compares favourably with any in the world.

LIST OF PROJECTS

It must not be forgotten, however, that many of the mothercraft and welfare projects now in full flower were pioneered by the Mothercraft Association of Queensland. To enumerate some of them:—

(1) The Mothercraft Association held the first public lectures and demonstrations in Mothercraft ever held in Queensland.

(2) It initiated broadcasts and articles in the newspapers on Mothercraft subjects.

(3) Gave first courses held here on teaching facts of life to children and on preparation for marriage—now conducted by the Father and Son Movement and the Marriage Guidance Council.

(4) Gave first courses on Venereal Disease and its prevention — still a neglected subject, but presented when requested by Health Education Council and their films.

(5) The M.A.Q. was the first and only body to train Home Assistants and emergency housekeepers, or, indeed, to see the necessity for such training, and to run a Bureau for their employment and for the help of mothers.

(6) It established the first professionally conducted Child-minding Centres — firstly in Overell's shop in the Valley and later with the C. and K. initiated the Kindercraft Centre during the War. It is now carried on as a large and firmly established centre with City Council support in the Town Hall.

(7) It initiated Mothercraft teaching in schools — taken over after the war by the Department of Maternal and Child Welfare Services, but only recently extended all over Queensland.

(8) Established first Mothercraft Hostel and After-care Home in 1942.

(9) It carried out the first Family Welfare Service for wives and children of Service men during the war.

(10) Conducted the only training given for Emergency Care of Children both in Brisbane and in Toowoomba — a pioneer wartime project.

(11) Conducted the first and only Child Care Mothercraft centre in Toowoomba.

(12) It initiated with other societies the Home Service board in 1946 for training and registration of housekeepers to try and raise the standards and status of domestic work — since lapsed in 1955-56.

(13) Published first Nursery Cookery Book and handbook of "Emergency Care of Children."

(14) It pioneered training of expectant mothers for Natural Childbirth, and imported and introduced the first films on depicting actual child birth to Queensland.

In the early days, 1934, the M.A.Q. opened the first baby nurseryware shop in Adelaide Street and operated it for some weeks during the Exhibition period, primarily to raise money, but also to demonstrate the type of clothing, nursery furniture and utensils approved by good mothercraft.

Also introduced the "Baby Safety Cot" with insect-proof sides and top for this summer climate.

In fact, the Mothercraft Association over its 30 years of vigorous life, acted as a fore-runner and a stimulus to other bodies interested in social welfare, particularly in Maternal and Child Welfare, initiating many pilot projects that have since become incorporated into the pattern of social life in Queensland.